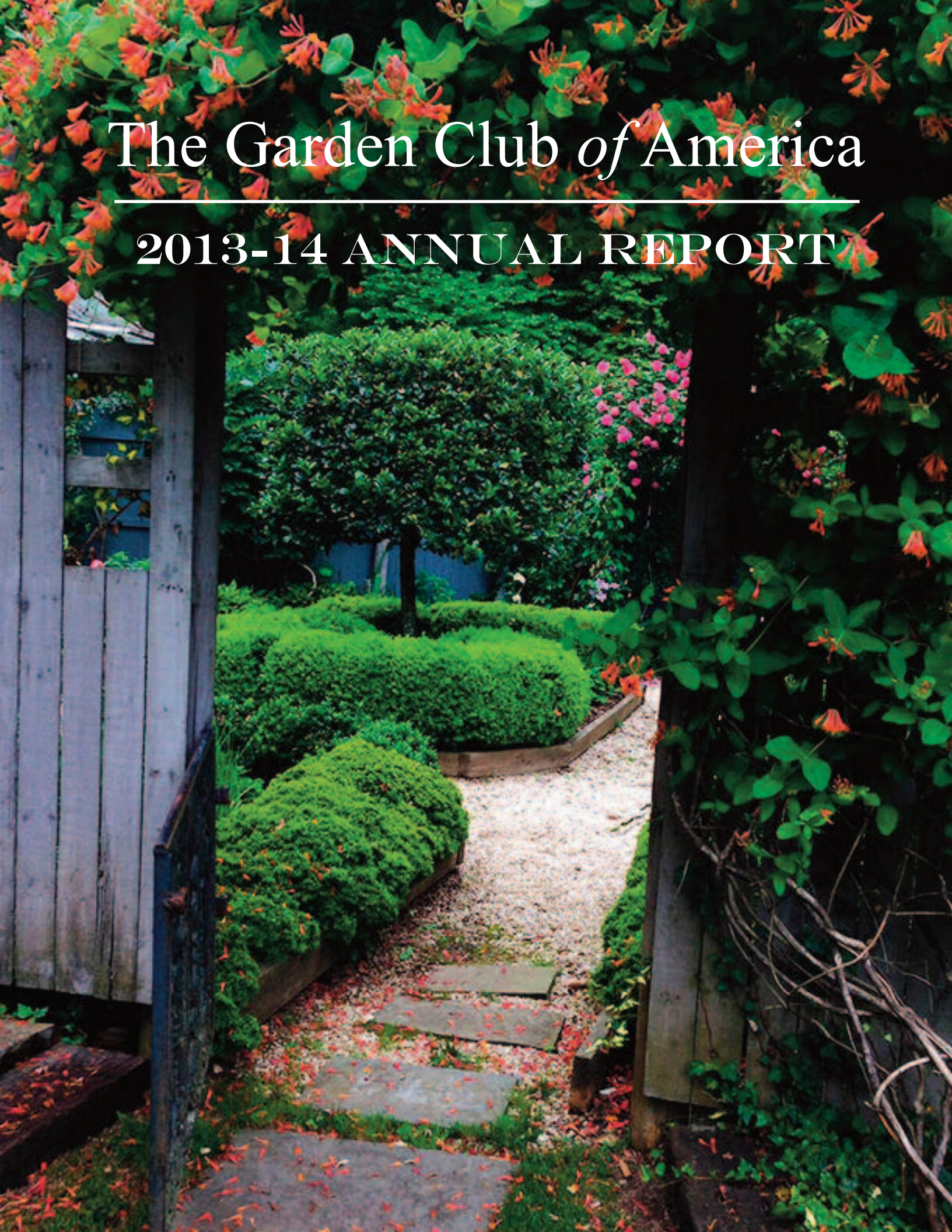


The Garden Club *of* America

2013-14 ANNUAL REPORT

From The President

The Garden Club of America has nearly completed the first year of its second century. Last year when I accepted the position of serving as your president, I assured you that change would not occur simply for the sake of change but would be carefully measured and weighed and if approved, it would be change that would be for the greater good of the entire organization.

Change has indeed taken place during this past year, beginning with the staff at GCA Headquarters. Under the extraordinary leadership of the GCA's Chief Operating Officer, we have a well-trained and highly capable staff that now numbers eleven. Each of them is dedicated to performing his or her job with excellence and has a firm commitment to serving the GCA and its leadership. GCA Headquarters is in outstanding condition and the office is thriving.

A Photography Committee was approved in March that will go into effect July 1 of this year. This is the first new national committee in many, many years. Countless hours of careful thought and consideration went into this decision, beginning with the recommendation of an ad hoc committee comprised of two former GCA presidents, both of whom are judges, and a current Executive Committee member who served as chairman of both the Flower Show and Judging Committees and has subsequently served as liaison to both. Another current GCA Vice President also made invaluable contributions, as did the present Flower Show and Judging chairmen. This was truly a collaborative effort and the approval of this new committee was a carefully measured decision by your Executive Committee. I would like to quote the first chairman of the Photography Committee. "My committee and those who went before me to pioneer the way will be so proud that the GCA has taken this major step into the well documented world in which we find ourselves. We will work hard to make you proud."

The GCA's lease at its Headquarters in New York expires in February 2015. I formed an ad hoc Lease Committee last summer to examine all options and alternatives regarding staying in our present headquarters or moving, including relocating to another city. It was determined that the functions of several GCA committees such as House, Hospitality, Library, Archives, and the position of Historian rely heavily for volunteer support from the dense geographical population of the more than 60 clubs in the zones contiguous to the New York City area. This support would not be feasible in another location. It would also mean relocating the current staff. Both of these critical considerations led to a recommendation that GCA Headquarters remain in NY City and the Executive Committee approved this. The ad hoc Lease Committee is continuing to examine space and rental options within New York City and will arrive at a recommendation in the near future.

Another change that will occur on a trial basis is the number of *Bulletins* that will be published each year. Beginning next fall, the *Bulletin* will be published four times a year rather than six. Each issue will have 64 pages instead of the current 32. Again, this decision was carefully weighed by both the Finance and Executive Committees and will be reassessed at the end of June 2015 to determine if this was successful, both financially and with the membership. I assure you that the *Bulletin* will remain in hard copy and will continue to appear in

your United States mailbox unless you opt to receive it online.

Every five years, the GCA President forms a Strategic Planning Committee with a representative from each of the twelve zones to assess the current state of the GCA and consider directions for its future. The 2013-18 Strategic Planning Committee is hard at work doing just that. To assist in this process, a questionnaire was sent both online and in the *Bulletin* to all 18,000 club members. There was an excellent response from all levels of the membership and the results of this survey will be shared with the entire membership. The Strategic Planning Committee expects to present its conclusions and recommendations to the Executive Committee in June.

The GCA's current website was built from the ground up by a dedicated group of volunteers working with professional programmers. The benefits of having this online tool are many, and they multiply as technology continues to evolve. Perhaps most notably, the website provides us with a reliable method of sharing the many valuable resources of the organization with club members. Staff members have recently been at work preparing the website for a relaunch in late spring that will include improved search capabilities, a fresh layout, and a mobile responsive design. Feedback from members at both the club and national level helped inspire these new features that will make it easier for us all to find and use the GCA's online resources.

I hope all of you are aware of the Bridge the Gap campaign that began last fall to raise $270,000 to restore visitor access to the GCA Redwoods Grove and to simultaneously retire the balance of the GCA's unwritten commitment to Save the Redwoods League to contribute half the land acquisition costs for the over 5,100 acre GCA Grove. It was always my dream to be able to announce at this meeting that we had achieved this goal.

It is with the greatest amount of pleasure and inestimable pride that, thanks to the coast to coast participation and generosity of our clubs and their members, I can announce today that we have reached this goal and the GCA has Bridged the Gap. This is a dream that came true for all of us! We plan to publish the names of all the individuals and clubs who contributed to the Bridge the Gap campaign. Because June 30 was established as the deadline to complete this effort, we will wait until that date to close out the campaign. This will enable those who still wish to donate to do so and to be credited for contributing. The GCA's $270,000 will supply only part of the funds needed to restore the trails and bridges surrounding the GCA Grove and rehabilitate the GCA Day Use Area for visitors. Save the Redwoods will welcome any additional funds and the GCA has requested that they be designated for rehabilitating the GCA Day Use Area as the 2018 Annual Meeting will be held in Zone XII. This accomplishment reflects the power of the commitment of our clubs and their members and I thank all of you who supported this effort and enabled the GCA to close this chapter in its proud history.

Change is inevitable in life and it will continue to occur in the GCA just as it does in the world. Not everyone will always agree with the changes but like so many things, compromise is necessary and inevitable and in fact, compromise is what gave birth to this country. Please know with confidence that our future will remain firmly rooted in our past and all that we have inherited and our core values will never change.

As many of you know, my goal for this past year was to help the clubs understand that they are the core and foundation of the organization. As this GCA year comes to a close and I direct my focus to my goals for next year, I keep returning to the directive for education in our Purpose Statement. Education is the essence of all we do in our clubs and in our national committees and it is what the GCA has always done best. I would like to

propose that during the next year and beyond, the clubs and their individual members, the GCA leadership, and each of the national committees turn their focus to the areas where education is most needed and determine how to accomplish it more effectively. Perhaps we should look at education with a fresh new perspective: the education of children of all ages, from preschoolers to high school students.

I go to Sun Valley, Idaho in the summer and each year when I return there and go on my first hike, I am greeted by the familiar smell in the woods and each year I am struck by the continuity of that smell as if it were the essence of the earth itself. The natural world in all its present forms speaks to each of us in different ways and thus, the essence of the earth is different for each of us. Our children, our grandchildren and indeed, all future generations should have the choice of defining what the essence of the earth, as it is today, will be for each of them and it falls to us to do whatever we can to ensure that. It is our duty to educate our children and give them the tools to preserve the essence of the earth.

It has been said that people support what they help to create and the same will be true of the children if we educate them. Nelson Mandela said: 'Education is the most powerful tool you can use to change the world." I will leave you with the thought that the real resource is the people; the key is education. Let us use The Garden Club of America's resources to educate the children.

Katharine P. Heins
GCA President 2013-2015
2014 Annual Meeting Remarks

Mission Statement

The purpose of The Garden Club of America is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to share the advantages of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence and publications, and to restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment through educational programs and action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement.

THE GAP IS BRIDGED!

Success! At the 2014 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, GCA president Katie Heins announced with great pleasure and pride that, thanks to the generosity of GCA clubs and to club members coast to coast, the Bridge the Gap campaign has reached its goal! Katie also added that further contributions designated to the campaign until June 30 will be credited to the donors and will help restore the Day Use Area in the GCA Grove. Thank you to all who supported the GCA's commitment to Save the Redwoods and Bridge the Gap!

. . . to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening,

Flower Show

2013-14 proved productive and enriching for the Flower Show Committee (FSC). The focus was to promote the magic of flower shows while making the shows accessible for clubs. Comprised of more than 30 members generously sharing their time and expertise, FSC is a large committee that achieves extraordinary results.

Flower shows continue as a core element of clubs and a popular expression of art. Presenting a GCA Flower Show embodies the mission statement of the GCA; each show fosters broad sharing of knowledge and love of gardening. Bench, club, GCA and

GCA Major Flower Shows numbered over 100 this year. The shows facilitated the celebration of talents and passions of the GCA's 200 member clubs nationwide.

The Floral Design subcommittee continued its work with the Flower Arranging Study Group (FASG), providing educational opportunities to its members. The FASG expanded its popular "101" programs with advanced workshops entitled "201" and "301." These workshops allowed aspiring floral arrangers from all clubs to hone their skills. These enriching experiences will have far-reaching benefits for members.

Flower Show Committee publications continue to serve as a major resource for clubs in the critical design and execution of flower shows. The online Flower Show & Judging Guide, the newsletter *The Show Must Go On* and the subscription magazine *By Design*, all brought valuable resources to clubs to answer questions, offer support and inspire. The goal was to present topical materials in a user-friendly format designed to bring flower shows alive. Numerous resources were updated on the Flower Show Committee pages, including a design library, forms for flower show procedures, printable entry cards and online award reports. An added module, including photos of GCA and GCA Major Flower Show awards, was launched on the website as a valuable resource that celebrates artistic and horticultural excellence.

The Photography subcommittee, in existence for more than ten years, was launched as its own national committee. Representation of the discipline on the FSC will remain through the Photography schedule reader, as it is with horticulture, conservation and floral design.

A relationship with National Garden Club's Assembly of Flower Arrangers (AFA) was formalized to create a single unit from the United States as members in WAFA. The United States Floral Designers Society (USFDS) is made up of representatives from both the AFA and FASG to determine participation in WAFA shows and seminars.

Judging

Maintaining and promoting the standards of excellence set by the GCA in flower shows is the purpose of the GCA's Judging Committee. In March of 2014 the Judging Committee rolled out a major improvement to the online forms that had been instituted earlier. The committee encouraged the discouraged to try anew, so that they could finally achieve the goal of a paperless database to ease the workload of the zone representatives. The talented zone representatives organize dynamic judging workshops to ensure proper training and professional development for candidates, prospective and established judges in Floral Design, Horticulture and Photography. In the 2013-14 year, 46 members (10 approved, 25 candidate and 11 prospective judges) have been welcomed into or advanced in the program, making our numbers strong at 1000+. New members to the program are always welcome.

Visiting Gardens

The Visiting Garden Committee plans trips both in the United States and overseas to educate members of GCA clubs in garden history and design, horticulture and the environment. The committee also facilitates club member visits to the gardens of other GCA Club members throughout the United States as well as the gardens of GCA International Courtesy Clubs.

In 2014, Visiting Gardens offered three trips: Indochina (Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam); Kentucky (Louisville and Lexington); and the Low Countries (Belgium and the Netherlands), for a total of 92 participants.

In February, a trip took 28 GCA participants to the Far East, visiting Bangkok and Chao Praya River, Angkor Wat and a private junk that

navigated stunning rock formations in Halong Bay, Vietnam. May's trip to Louisville and Lexington offered lush Southern gardens and elegant thoroughbreds along the Falls of the Ohio and the Kentucky River. To honor our visit and the GCA, the Mayor of Lexington named May 22, 2014 "Springtime in the Bluegrass." Finally, members marveled at the variety of garden designs and abundant flowers along the Sennes River in Brussels and the Amstel in Bruges and Amsterdam.

Committee members are evaluating the web page for possible enhancements and continuing research into a national garden events list. Finally, the committee is working on encouraging more club-to-club trips by offering planning tools and sample budgets. The goal is to enable the visiting club to do most of the trip planning and not burden the visited club.

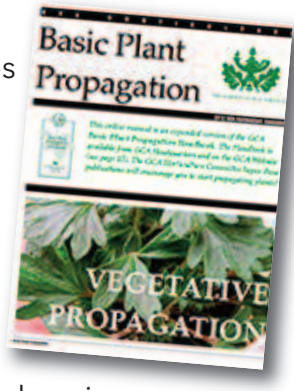
PARTNERS FOR PLANTS

Partners for Plants is the joint habitat restoration program of the GCA's Conservation and Horticulture Committees. Its purpose is to facilitate projects between local GCA clubs and land managers on federal, state, local and other significant public lands.

Since July 1, 2013, the Partners for Plants initiative experienced tremendous growth reaching a high of 41 projects. Fourteen new projects were initiated and five have been completed. Each GCA zone has at least two projects. A goal of 50 projects by 2017 has been set for the 25th year of operations.

Horticulture

The GCA Horticulture Committee continued its appointed work nurturing the knowledge and love of gardening and promoting and protecting valuable plants in 2014 with gusto. How?



- By promoting horticultural activities in GCA clubs and zones
- By publishing *The Real Dirt,* 5 information packed issues
- By hosting the 12th annual Shirley Meneice Horticultural Conference at the National Arboretum and U.S. Botanic Gardens in Washington, D.C.
- By collaborating with the GCA Conservation Committee in their Partners for Plants habitat restoration initiative
- By selecting the 2014 Freeman Medal Award winning plant of the year– *Asclepias tuberosa*–also known as Butterfly Weed
- By promoting the Seed Share and Propagation program

.....to share the advantages of association

House Committee

The House Committee of The Garden Club of America acknowledges all gifts to GCA Headquarters and makes recommendations to the Executive Committee about acceptance and de-accession of gifts of considerable value. Further, the committee researches and supervises the interior design and maintenance of furnishings. In this regard, the committee collaborates with the Archive and Hospitality Committees of the GCA to review overall furnishing of Headquarters. The members of the House Committee decorate Headquarters on an on-going basis for meetings and other GCA functions, providing seasonal décor for the entry and centerpieces for the dining tables.

Coinciding with the Centennial in June 2013, members of the House Committee conducted tours of the GCA's Headquarters. Enhancements had been made prior to this historic celebration to ensure that Headquarters looked its best. This included re-decoration of the president's office, cleaning and framing the 'State Flowers' needlepoint in the lounge area, framing and hanging six GCA scarves in the coat closet, reupholstering the reception area furniture, repainting the staff hallway, a new curtain in the 'C and C' room, and re-hanging pieces of art.

Hospitality

The Hospitality Committee of The Garden Club of America coordinates and serves meals at Café GCA at the New York City Headquarters. Meals are provided during the quarterly meeting weeks and when GCA committees or clubs meet. This dedicated committee is made up of members from the New York metropolitan area clubs. Since the last annual meeting, more than 1,200 meals were served by this energetic group. Working with the caterer, the committee's goal is to serve healthy, delicious and attractive meals for all to enjoy. The kitchen is small but efficient. The volunteers prepare hors d'oeuvres and desserts off property while the main meals are prepared and plated at the kitchen at Headquarters.

Clubs are encouraged to schedule a visit to Headquarters and to partake of the special hospitality in the lovely Crowninshield Room. The GCA's staff liaison handles the reservations.

Historian

The GCA historian assisted member clubs in writing or updating their histories and responded to specific inquiries from members and outside researchers. A dozen or more published histories were reviewed and acknowledged, including Saint Paul Garden Club, Green Spring Valley Garden Club, Founders Garden Club of Dallas and North Country Garden Club of Long Island. Articles and presentations bringing GCA history to life were prepared for the *Bulletin, eNews,* website and numerous meetings. The historian continued an initiative to collect oral histories of past GCA presidents and collaborated with the Archives Committee on development of a collections management plan for digitizing the GCA's historical materials. In June 2014 the historian was authorized by the GCA's Board of Directors to invite four assistants to aid her in documenting, preserving and disseminating the history of the national organization and its members.

Archives

The Archives Committee sought to identify best practices in organizing and digitizing the GCA's 10 decades of archival history, most notably working with the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University. The result was a collections management plan for the GCA that establishes criteria for archived materials and eventual storage on Google Drive.

The Archives Committee counseled other GCA committees regarding what documents to keep and where to store them, ensuring vital records are preserved and avoiding duplication. A new online archive research request form for GCA members and outside researchers was created for the website. Inquirers fill out the form and committee members follow up. The online resource, *Tips on Archiving for GCA Clubs,* was updated to help clubs set up and organize their archives.

Royal Horticultural Society

The Garden Club of America/Royal Horticultural Society Interchange Fellowship was established in 1948. This one year fellowship provides a reciprocal exchange of British and American students in horticulture, landscape architecture and related fields.
2014 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Interchange Fellow: Jon Henn, a Fulbright and National Geographic Young Explorers grant recipient, graduated with distinction in Biology and *magna cum laude* in 2012 from St. Olaf College in Minnesota. Jon's interests lie in attempting to increase the role botanical gardens can play in helping to restore ecosystems around the globe. During his RHS Fellowship he will participate in five placements in different gardens across the United

Kingdom. The award-winning entry, "A Lasting Legacy" at the 2013 RHS Chelsea Flower Show, is now featured on the video pages of the GCA website.

Admissions Committee

Each year, the GCA recognizes extraordinary efforts in gardening, conservation and education through the extension of honorary memberships to non-GCA members who best exemplify and promote the ideals of The Garden Club of America.

2014 HONORARY MEMBERS ARE

- Zone X- Dr. James K. Bissell, Curator of Botany and Director of Conservation at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History
- Zone VII- Dr. Paul E. Cappiello, Executive Director of Yew Dell Botanical Gardens, Crestwood KY and adjunct Associate Professor of Horticulture at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY
- Zone VIII- Staci L. Catron, Executive Director at the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center and Board Chairman of the Southern Garden Society
- Zone IX- R. King Milling, Chairman of America's WETLAND Foundation, New Orleans, LA, Member of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Coastal Protection and Restoration, Trust for Coastal Stewardship Director
- Zone XII- Richard Schulhof, CEO at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanical Garden

THE ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN GARDENS (AAG)

was established to provide scholars, researchers, and interested persons with visual documentation of cultural, historic, and vernacular gardens. Its primary mission, in conjunction with The Garden Club of America's Garden History and Design Committee, is to collect unique, high quality images and documentation relating to a wide variety of cultivated gardens throughout the United States not documented elsewhere. In this way, AAG strives to high-light a meaningful compendium of significant aspects of gardening in the United States for the benefit of researchers and the public now and in the future.

The most frequently used portion of The Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens are the glass lantern slides that were created in the 1920s and 1930s. Only the foresight of The Garden Club of America to photograph what were then 'contemporary gardens' saved these gardens from total oblivion.

Garden History and Design

The GCA's Garden History and Design Committee (GH&D) works to preserve the history of gardening in America through the identification and documentation of private and public gardens throughout the United States. In collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, GCA club members research and document gardens for the Smithsonian's Archives of the American Gardens (AAG) housed in their Horticulture Services Division. The core of this national archive is the unique slide library of Notable American Parks and Gardens: nearly 3000 hand-colored glass lantern slides dating from the 1920s and 1930s donated by the GCA. As of March 2014, 69 documentations were in progress or completed by GCA clubs and 49 gardens were added to the Archives in 2013.

The GH&D Exhibit in the Annual Meeting Flower Show was a group effort by the committee and AAG. Each zone representative was asked to search the AAG for garden photos from her zone showing "Rhythm." Members of the committee and Smithsonian reviewed all photos to choose those best exhibiting the word. The Exhibit committee wrote a statement of intent and explored the meaning of rhythm in garden design. The result of this teamwork was the *Ann Lyon Crammond Award* given for an outstanding exhibit best educating the public about gardens and increasing the appreciation of plants, gardens or landscape design. In addition, zone representatives gave workshops to educate the clubs, and the clubs documented more gardens for submittal to the AAG.

Zone III

SOUNDS OF 2013-2014 IN ZONE III ...

- **high praise** for the flower show *Seeds of Rye,* part of the September Zone III Meeting of the same name hosted by the Rye Garden Club and the Little Garden Club of Rye, as club presidents, delegates and guests have their first look ...
- **conversations** about the fun and challenges of being a club president, how to navigate the GCA website, and advice on public speaking mixed with mirth.
- **an auctioneer's gavel** signaling a winning bid at Garden Club of Irvington-on-Hudson's holiday fundraiser …
- **regular updates** on improving and protecting our environment from Conservation and NAL
- **applause** for inspired flower arranger Hitomi Gilliam hosted by Rochester Garden Club in April…
- **hearty congratulations** at 100th anniversary celebrations for Ulster, Philipstown, Millbrook, and East Hampton Garden Clubs
- **sincere thanks** and appreciation for *Harbors on the Sound*, June's Zone III meeting hosted by Three Harbors Garden Club on the northern shore of Long Island…

Scholarship

Donations are up. The committee will distribute funds to 86 Scholars in the amount of $300,000. The General Scholarship Fund will distribute close to $40,000, allowing the GCA to offer more scholarships. In 2012, which was considered a banner year, the committee awarded 79 scholarships. In comparison, in 2009-2010, more than 50 scholars received $211,200 in funding. At that time, the General Scholarship Fund held $16,825.

Applications are also on the rise. The quality of applicants is due to many factors: scholar speakers at more meetings across the country, the Centennial; the cumulative effect of better exposure about the program through *Bulletin* articles in almost every issue; *eNews* articles when relevant; and outstanding committee members who understand how to explain and promote the program at the club level.

All in all, 2013-2014 was another outstanding year for the GCA scholarship program.

. . . by means of educational meetings, conferences,

Annual Meeting 2014

From May 7th to the 11th approximately 700 gardeners, designers, conservationists and preservationists, representing each of the GCA's 200 clubs, gathered in New Orleans for the 101st Annual Meeting of The Garden Club of America. Hosted by Zone IX, "Rhythm of the Rivers", featured educational tours of local historic preservation, conservation, civic garden, sustainability, and garden history and design projects. Delegates explored the New Orleans Botanical Garden, the City Park, the Edible School Yards project, and Longue House and Gardens. Optional tours included trips to local cultural spots, Bayou plantations and gardens, Turtle Cove, the "jungle gardens" of Avery Island and private homes and gardens in Natchez, Mississippi.

During the business meetings, members got "down to GCA basics". Thirty five presentations were delivered including reports from the treasurer, twelve zone chairmen, twenty standing committee chairmen, three special committee chairmen. Highlights included the Founders Fund Award which went to Garden Club of New Haven for its project, "Safeguarding the American Elm" and the GCA Plant of the Year Award which was awarded to the Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa*. The meeting featured a variety of excellent key-note and

guest speakers, including Dr. Scott Cowen, president of Tulane University and Rachel Guy, the 2014 Scholarship speaker.

The outstanding Flower Show had ten design classes, fifty-one horticulture classes, seven photography classes, five Botanical Jewelry Classes and both Education and Conservation Exhibits.

The workshops for the delegates, presidents and zone representatives were designed to emphasize the many valuable GCA resources available to clubs including specialty publications, reference lists, reading lists, GCA conferences, program suggestions, award possibilities and other information available on the Members Area of the GCA website. Additional workshops included "Introduction to Digital Photograph" and "Seasonal Entertaining", a session on public speaking and a hands- on "Flower Show in a Box" exercise.

National Awards:

John H. Bryan Elizabeth Craig Weaver Proctor Medal for exemplary service and creative vision in any field related to The Garden Club of America.

Dr. Edna Grace Knore Claunch Amy Angell Collier Montague Medal for outstanding civic achievement.

Steve Curwood Margaret Douglas Medal for notable service to the cause of conservation education.

Susan Detjens Bonnylin Woods Martin Medal for the most consistently innovative flower designs.

Legacy Parks Foundation Cynthia Pratt Laughlin Medal for outstanding achievement in environmental protection and the maintenance of quality of life.

Joanne Lenden The Achievement Medal in recognition of outstanding achievement and in tribute to creative vision and ability in the interpretation and furtherance of the aims of The Garden Club of America.

Mary Stone Phipps Distinguished Service Medal for distinguished service in the field of horticulture.

Will Raap Medal of Honor for outstanding service to horticulture.

Nelda C. and H.J. Lutcher Stark Historic Preservation Medal for outstanding work in the field of preservation and restoration of historic gardens or buildings of national importance.

Ralph R. White Francis K. Hutchinson Medal for distinguished service to conservation.

Freeman Award:

The 2014 Freeman Medal was awarded by the GCA to *Asclepias tuberosa* (Butterfly Weed). This medal is awarded to a North American native plant worthy of special

recognition. With its fiery orange and fragrant flowers, the Butterfly Weed combines beauty, hardiness, and environmental value.

It is long lived, and produces a pod that reseeds. Root hardy in USDA Zones 3 to 9, it is drought tolerant and requires well drained soil. Attracting a wide variety of pollinators, its greatest value is serving as the larval host plant to the endangered Monarch butterfly

Nominated by a member of The Garden Club of Houston, Zone IX)

National Affairs and Legislation Committee: NAL

NAL Committee activities included drafting a Legislative Update (LU) on reform of the Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA). Congress may take action on toxic substances in the near future, and the update outlines steps GCA members can take to support constructive reform. The update was mailed to all Conservation/NAL committee members and zone representatives, posted on the NAL page of the GCA website and published in *eNews*.

The first online invitation/registration for the NAL meeting in Washington, D.C. for February 24-27, 2014 was completed, thanks to a remarkable team effort among NAL.

NAL and Conservation chairmen occasionally send letters to members of Congress or top administration officials on legislative or regulatory issues. These letters can be found in the Members Area of the GCA website

Three hundred GCA delegates, mostly the presidents or Conservation/NAL chairmen of their clubs, had a productive time in Washington D.C. in spite of the political climate surrounding the budget sequestration.

The committee concentrated on the issues covered by The Garden Club of America's position papers, listened to knowledgeable speakers, and took positive attitudes to Capitol

NAL CONTINUED

Hill. The goodwill towards, and appreciation of, the GCA's thirty years of past endeavors at NAL meetings was evident in the high quality of speakers and the supportive comments made by Congressmen and others who spoke.

Frances Bienecke, president of the Natural Resources Defense Council, gave the keynote presentation. Other speakers included Gina McCarthy, the president's nominee for Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and representatives of Outdoors America, The Wilderness Society, the Student Conservation Association, and the U.S. Climate Action Network. On Wednesday, Senators Whitehouse, of Rhode Island, and King, newly elected from Maine, along with three congressmen addressed the delegates on Capitol Hill.

Zone VII

Zone VII's 18 clubs throughout Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina enjoyed numerous educational opportunities during the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014.

The Garden Club of Lexington hosted the fall zone meeting, "Through the Garden Gate." Paul Cappiello of Yew Dell Botanical Gardens lectured on plant discoveries in the wilds of Kentucky. Conservation "6 Pack" ideas were shared and taken home; artistic arrangements and bountiful horticulture were enjoyed at the Flower Show. Doug Tallamy showed how native plants sustain wildlife in our gardens. The beauty of Ashland Garden on the Henry Clay Estate, maintained by the Garden Club of Lexington, inspired and will continue to educate future gardeners.

Glenview Garden Club funded a three-year watering project for trees in Louisville's downtown. Mill Mountain educated politicians with a forum on conservation issues. Gabrielle Rausse of Monticello presented a program entitled "Cooking Unusual Vegetables from Thomas Jefferson's Garden" to Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club. James River Garden Club visited the exceptional gardens at Whilton. Kanawha Garden Club held a propagation workshop on begonias. Peyton Wells from Tuckahoe Garden Club created a prototype for a "Virtual Flower Show" and produced it online. Zone VII loves learning!

Zone XII

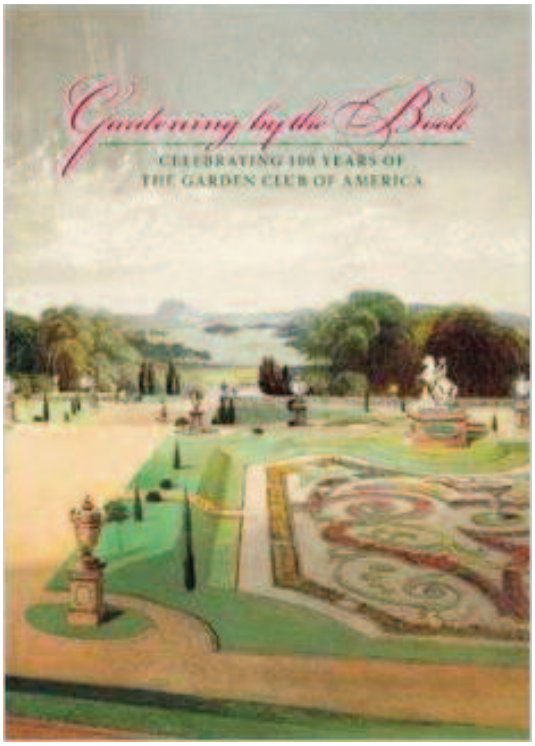
Zone XII, the largest GCA zone, covers over 684,000 square miles. Eighteen clubs range from desert, tropical Hawaii, Green Pacific Northwest to the continental states. Zone XII clubs work tirelessly in conservation with the greatest number of Partners for Plants projects and the most delegates attending NAL in Washington, D.C. The zone has addressed many questions about how to sustain club membership, encourage diversity, reach out to the younger generation and adjust meeting times.

Through the due diligence of the co-chairmen for the 2018 San Francisco Annual Meeting, the theme of the 2018 Annual Meeting has been announced. It is "How the West Is One", inspired by the vastness and diversity of the West, we find common ground and common goals in carrying out the mission of The Garden Club of America.

Library

General Library and Rare Books Collections

The Library of The Garden Club of America is maintained for the benefit of the 200 GCA clubs and their members, as well as members of the public on an appointment-only basis. Books written by GCA club members are kept on designated book shelves in the Executive Committee meeting room and the Rare Books Collection is stored in a locked, humidity-controlled environment.
The Library Committee provides updates on its activities and reviews of GCA owned books in two ways: *Leafing Through* articles appear in the *Bulletin* while *Off The Shelf* reviews of books appear periodically in *eNews*.



By far the biggest news in 2014 was that a book written by the chairman of the Library Committee, ***Gardening by the Book*** won a prestigious award, a bronze medal from the Independent Book Publishers Association under its Home & Garden category. These IBPA's *Benjamin Franklin Awards* include 52 categories recognizing excellence in book editorial and design, and are regarded as one of the highest national honors for independent publishers.

Congratulations to Linda Florio, GBTB designer, and Arete Warren, Millbrook GC, Zone III for this exemplary award.

Program Committee

The directive for the 2013-2014 Program Committee was to create new program resources for GCA membership that would be useful for general club programming, club committee activities and independent study. The task force was comprised of 12 zone representatives, a committee chairman and vice chairman. The results achieved were many, including:

- An online movie guide with more than 120 titles in six categories: Conservation/Environment/Animals; Food/Health; Garden History & Design; Horticulture; GCA; and Program Committee Archives
- A guide to Fundraising Ideas for GCA clubs organized by type of event
  - Sales ■ Social ■ Service ■ Simple
- A list of technology-based programming including live online presentations, webinars, online courses, and videos

The Program Committee also produced "Raves and Faves," organized by zone, scores of low cost and no cost program ideas, the GCA Trivia Quiz, the GCA Resources Guidebook - where there is a link to *GCA Hot Shots, Hot Spots & What's Hot! The 2014 Insider's Guide to the GCA's Scorching Resources*, and the Program Committee Toolkit.

...and by means of correspondence and publications

Communication Committee

The Communications Committee is dedicated to furthering the goals of the GCA – from the development and maintenance of the GCA website to assisting local clubs in building their own websites… from enhancing the effectiveness of inter-committee communications to supporting national outreach – ComCom is the committee that links all of our efforts together.

During this quarter, the web team met with the website programmer and the COO to develop a long-term action plan for technology and the website. The committee has begun the process of turning over meeting registrations to Headquarters and further task division is underway.

ALSO ACCOMPLISHED IN 2013-14

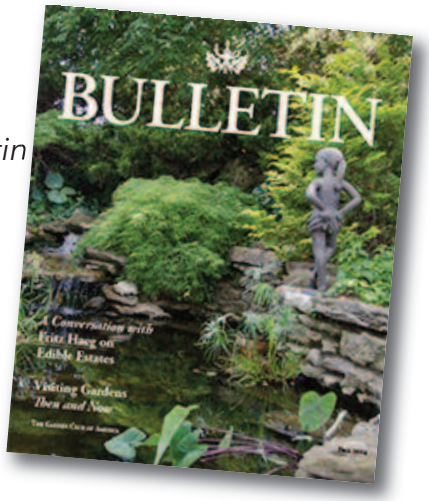
- Updated the former GCA brochure and created an online version
- Launched and continue to troubleshoot the new judging forms
- Reviewed and developed critical GCA communications policies

- Presented three Zone Communications Awards (one of the best parts of the job!)
- Made a presentation at the Zone III Judging Workshop and conducted two communications workshops at the Annual Meeting
- Designed and continued to revise the Freeman Medal pages
- Approved 23 club communications awards
- Created and sent three *eNews* issues
- Created and sent 18 registration Save the Dates, Reminders, and Invites
- Conducted three registration webinars
- Continually responded to communications emails on weekends and after office hours

Bulletin

The oldest established publication of The Garden Club of America, the *Bulletin*, has grown in scope and appearance since it was first published in 1913. In 2013-2014, this glossy, full color print magazine was published six times during the year and distributed to all members of GCA clubs. It continued its mission "to keep member clubs informed of the international, national and local scope of GCA activities while allowing members to communicate and exchange ideas."

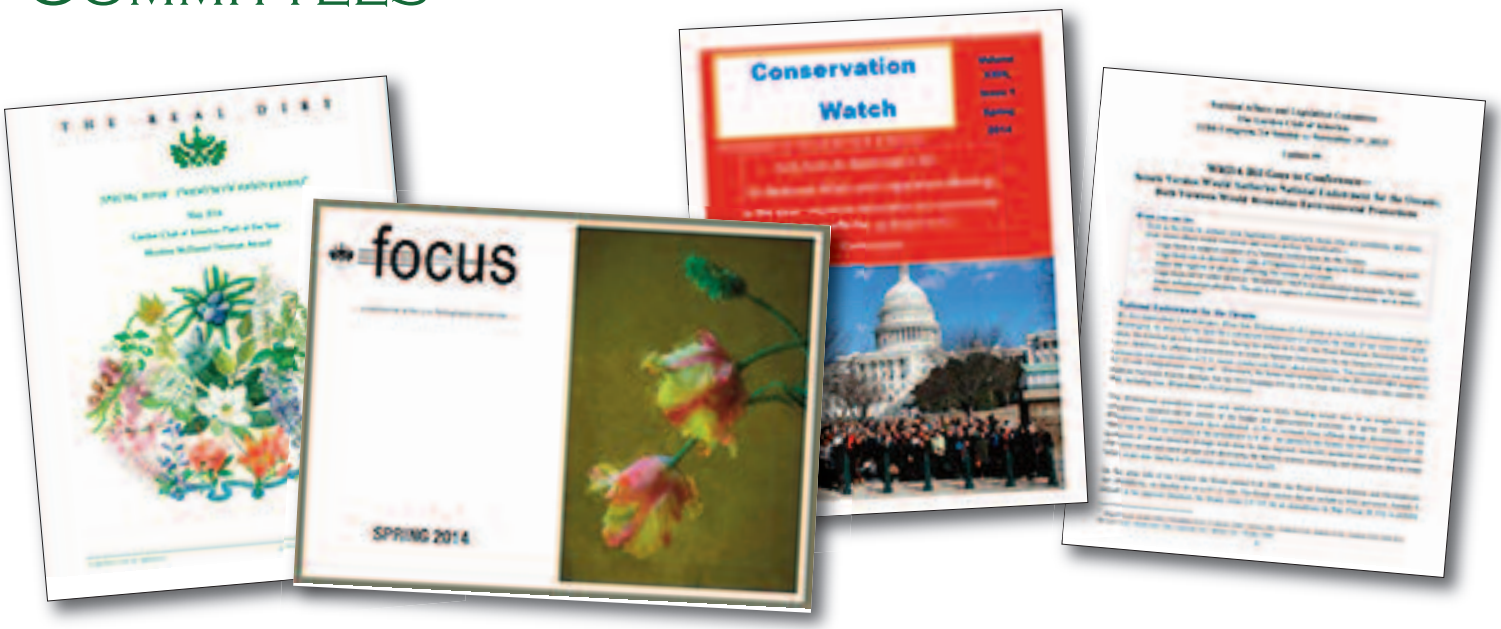
As GCA leadership and membership advanced and changed in our technologically savvy world, so did the *Bulletin*. During 2014, the committee investigated the website's capability to offer a more readable digital version of current and archived issues of the magazine. In February 2014, what was traditionally available as a print publication was introduced on *gcamerica.org* as an online "page turning" version of the magazine.



This 2013-2014 *Bulletin* included news and photographs from GCA member clubs around the country as well as reports and updates from meetings of national committees and zones. Each issue included a message from President Katie Helms and special columns such as "GCA 101: Do You Know," the "Bulletin Board," and "Focus." Also included were advertisements and classified ads that provided the primary source of revenue for production of the magazine.

With the onset of advancing technology in this ever evolving world, much has changed in our lives. But, while format and distribution strategies have been altered over the years, our dependable and enjoyable *Bulletin* is still a vital part of the purpose of The Garden Club of America: "To share the advantages of association by means of publications."

Online Publications created by GCA Committees



. . . action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement.

Conservation

Conservation is at the core of the GCA mission and is the heart of what gardeners do. For the Centennial celebration of The Garden Club of America, "The History of Conservation in the Garden Club of America" was published. It chronicles the remarkable legacy -- from establishing an iconic conservation project, the GCA Redwood Grove, in the 1930's, to a significant role in the environmental movement in the United States. It's an impressive history. Now as the GCA begins a new century, the challenge of educating, encouraging and equipping members to be more effective stewards of our environment changes hands to a new generation.

Our commitment to conservation matters not only to the GCA organization because we need to attract and engage the next generation as they are interested in environmental issues, but more importantly it matters to our planet. The Conservation Committee takes the moral obligation to future generations to heart and works to protect our natural resources.

Founders Fund

Congratulations to Worcester Garden Club. On September 16, 2013 after four years of research, designing, writing and planting, the Worcester Garden Club celebrated the completion of the 2011 Founders Fund Project: the Asian Longhorned Beetle Resistant Arboretum in Green Hill Park.

The announcement of the winner of the Founders Fund Award is always a highlight of the business meeting held on the first day of the GCA annual meeting. The winner of the 2014 $30,000 Founders Fund Award was The Garden Club of New Haven, Zone II, for *Safeguarding the American Elm: Preserving New Haven's Roots, New Haven, CT*. The proposal: "To restore the American Elm and, at the same time, educate and engage our community. Our project aims to expand our educational and horticultural reach by developing a school curriculum that includes growing and planting disease-resistant elms, conducting teacher workshops, and bringing students to the Green to experience its historic and environmental importance first hand."

The 2014 runners up each received $7500 for their projects, *Restoration of the Temple of Love: Untermyer Park and Gardens,* proposed by the Garden Club of Irvington-on-Hudson, Zone III and *The Big Green Time Machine,* proposed by the Peachtree Garden Club, Zone VIII.

Zone I

All 19 clubs in Zone I were incredibly active in their communities maintaining gardens and green spaces in public places. Beacon Hill hosted its Hidden Gardens Tour drawing 2300 visitors and raising $72,000 to distribute to 38 different organizations. Worcester Garden Club completed its Founders Fund project, an ALB-Resistant Arboretum, with the installation of over thirty educational signs.

Monadnock Garden Club continues to work hard to preserve and improve 674 acres in an important conservations corridor called "West Hill to Pisgah." Digging all winter in a greenhouse, Buzzard's Bay Garden Club grows plants to sell in June to fund their community projects. Cambridge Garden Club began a discussion

when the club hosted a "Teach-In" on the science and ethics of Genetically Modified Organisms. Working with elementary school children, the Cohasset Garden Club held their "Bee a Pollinator Pal" program for the second year. In the shadow of Mt. Monadnock, Garden Club of Dublin graciously hosted the Zone I meeting "From Garden to Palette," highlighting artists from the region. Little Compton Garden Club celebrated its 90th year and Chestnut Hill had its hundredth anniversary.

Zone II

Zone II is 1800 members strong from seventeen Connecticut and three Rhode Island clubs. The zone's small geographic size is arguably its biggest asset. Clubs are close enough to reach each other by car for joint meetings, zone meetings, a Presidents' Council meeting and a Zone Representative meeting where all club chairmen meet with their respective zone representatives.

In 2013-2014 two clubs graciously hosted zone meetings – Middletown Garden Club in the fall of 2013 and Perennial Planters in the spring of 2014. An Annual Zone Horticulture Challenge (The Gavel) takes place at each zone meeting. Seeds or cuttings are distributed to clubs for growing, and then one entry from each club is judged at the zone meeting. The winning club's name is engraved on a gavel which they hold for a year.

Many clubs are approaching their own centennial celebrations. Those clubs are writing histories and recording their members' stories to help build for the future and remember the past. Zone II in the last two years has documented 12 gardens for the Smithsonian collection. Zone II's civic projects are remarkable and varied: from Heritage Rose Gardens, children's gardens, colonial kitchen gardens, rooftop gardens, school-yard gardens, native habitat gardens, to installing bee hives, cleaning up storm damage after hurricanes Sandy and Irene to beautify beaches, planting wildflower meadows, thousands of daffodils and planting 100 trees in celebration of the GCA's Centennial. We are most proud of New Haven Garden Club's Founders Fund submission, "Safeguarding the American Elm," which won the 2014 Founders' Fund.

Zone IV

Civic Projects! Zone Meeting! Education! Flower Shows! Workshops! Zone IV tackled the challenge of GCA 101 with enthusiasm and created a myriad of opportunities for garden club members to explore the significance of their ties to the GCA. Delegates to the Zone IV Meeting in June experienced classic GCA 101, experiencing all that the GCA has to offer while hearing from GCA national committee chairmen, zone chairmen and fourteen Zone IV representatives, as well as the GCA President (and Zone IV club member!) Katie Heins. Well attended workshops, the Presidents' Council Meeting and the

Zone Representatives' Meeting rounded out the year.

A few highlights of 2014 from around the zone:

- Reviving the Plant Exchange at the Zone IV Meeting;
- The Garden Club of Somerset Hills received the "Friend of High Bridge Award" in recognition of the five grants awarded to the High Bridge Environmental Commission to establish gardens;
- The Garden Club of Princeton joined Stony Brook Garden Club members and county Master Gardeners in planting over 300 *Asclepias incarnata* (Swamp Milkweed) this past summer;
- The Garden Club of Englewood harvested its first crop of chestnuts from one of the eight trees propagated and planted as part of the GCA Centennial Tree Project.

Zone V

A NEW garden entry goes into the Smithsonian Institution's "Archives of American Gardens" as documented by the Garden Club of Allegheny County. The significant Mikell Schenck garden is located in Fox Chapel, PA.

Two NEW reading Groups are established –

- The Gardeners read and discuss "The Wild Trees" by Robert Preston – a non-fiction story of botanists who found a primeval kingdom of plants and animals suspended in the canopy of the Redwoods.

- And the Huntingdon Valley Garden Club studies and practices, chapter by chapter, the newly published book entitled "A Fresh Look at Judging Floral Design", written by Hitomi Gilliam and Kathy Whelan.

NEW second grade conservationists emerge from the Pollinator Project hosted by the Gardeners.

NEW leaf casts are created by the Providence Garden Club in support of community projects.

NEW native plants are propagated by seed by the Garden Workers.

NEW terrariums are designed in the Carrie T. Watson Garden Club.

Twelve NEW floral designers are inspired by a zone-wide Floral Arranging 101 workshop.

And, like GCA, a NEW era begins in 2014 for:

The Garden Club of AC that celebrates 100 years, and for The Garden Club of Philadelphia, a founding club of GCA, celebrating 110 years

Zone VI

This year, the thirteen clubs and 700 members of Zone VI got down to GCA basics. Clubs in Maryland and Washington DC held workshops, flower shows, supported civic projects, and educated members about land conservancy and historic preservation. Sixty seasoned members shared their GCA experiences at a "Meeting of Great Minds" as they planned strategically for the future of Zone VI. Halten Garden Club held a workshop on trough gardening mechanics educating its members and producing an attractive container inventory for a club fundraiser. Catonsville Garden Club learned how to repurpose gourds to create modern harvest designs. Garden Club of Chevy Chase Club pushed its members to the next level by adding a challenge class to the club's flower show. Amateur Gardeners Club continued its longstanding commitment to historic preservation with a donation of visitor benches overlooking the lovely parterre gardens at historic Hampton. Garden Club of Twenty experienced the Talmar Gardens and Horticultural Therapy Center where the inspirational staff introduces the joys of gardening to those with disabilities and special needs. Hardy Garden Club's flower show featured a class of breathtaking home grown dahlias. Volunteers from Perennial Garden Club continued their commitment to the 2012 Founders Fund with several volunteer projects including teaching the boys at the urban Bishop Walker School to construct pine cone bird feeders. Talented Green Spring Valley Garden Club members collectively created an award winning design in the hunting lodge kitchen for Ladew Topiary Garden's holiday fundraiser. The entire zone gathered on the beautiful Eastern Shore of Maryland for a successful zone meeting co-hosted by Talbot County Garden Club and Guilford Garden Club. Delegates visited spectacular gardens and private conservation projects working to restore our endangered Chesapeake Bay. Zone VI is back to basics and thoroughly immersed in the GCA.

Zone VIII

Do you know that Zone VIII's association with its fifteen member clubs in Alabama, Florida, South Carolina and Georgia offers the ability to contribute to local communities through camaraderie and friendship?

This was evident at the Zone VIII meeting in April, 2014 which was hosted by the Little Garden Club of Birmingham. During "Ribbons of Green," participants learned how public parks created from former industrial sites could influence institutions and neighborhoods, promoting healthy living and enhancing

the quality of life. Attending members also celebrated each other and the successes they had enjoyed during the year.

For the past 46 years, Peachtree Garden Club has worked continually to develop, plant, fund, share, and care for the ten acre native plant woodland known as Swan Woods on the grounds of the Atlanta History Center. This year, their continued hard work was acknowledged as, "The Big Green Time Machine," a grant to provide trail improvements, site interpretation and create a historic landscape, was one of three finalists for the Founders Fund.

To celebrate the ambitious beginning of the "Falls Park on the Reedy" project and its successful development, Carolina Foothills' members worked tirelessly to plan a grand 10th anniversary celebration. To further bolster their spirits, national recognition for the project came from *Tripadvisor* as one of Traveler's Choice top 25 parks.

At their March meeting, The Red Mountain Garden Club honored its much loved member, Weesie Smith, with the "Weesie Smith Horticulture Award." This award will be given to a recipient within Zone VIII who has shown leadership concerning and knowledge of native plants, their protection, propagation and use in the landscape.

Shared knowledge and cultivated friendships were evident during the year as Late Bloomers Garden Club hosted the GCA Visiting Gardens Committee, the Zone VIII Garden History and Design Committee and the Trustees Garden Club from Savannah. Sharing their beautiful area with other GCA members exemplified the spirit found in clubs throughout Zone VIII.

Zone IX

Zone IX is comprised of twenty clubs in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Texas with a total of approximately 2600 club members. The clubs in Zone IX channeled their energy this year to welcome over 650 delegates from the member clubs of the GCA to New Orleans for "Celebrating the Rhythm of the Rivers." Each club sent enthusiastic members to work at the meeting for a total of more than 200 volunteers.

After planting thousands of trees for the GCA Centennial, the work of Zone IX continues in that effort by partnering with each other and other local organizations to plant more trees, adding to the economic, environmental and social benefits of their communities.

Restoration of public as well as private gardens overflows as a top priority. Zone IX is flooded with horticulture, workshops, flower arranging, and learning the science of photography.

Meanwhile the Zone IX clubs meander through the politics of conservation issues within their communities. They also raise money for their communities with plant and bulb sales, outstanding speakers, flower shows and other fun projects.

But it was not all work and no

An example of one of the 20 outstanding clubs in Zone IX of the GCA is The Little Rock Garden Club that was organized in 1923 and was the first garden club in Arkansas. In 1960, Little Rock Garden Club became a member of The Garden Club of America.

When the charter members began the club, they had a dream it would enrich the life and enhance the appearance of Little Rock. Ninety years later, one of their major projects is the Terry Mansion Grounds. An 1839 Greek Revival landmark owned by the city, Terry Mansion is the former home of prominent philanthropist Adolphine Fletcher Terry. The Little Rock Garden Club adopted the grounds as a club project in 1997, established a Butterfly Garden in 2001, and the club's members volunteer year round to support the property's horticulture maintenance.

play this year. At the end of the day, Zone IX clubs take time to bebop and enjoy each other. Unlike the river that flows in one direction, the women in Zone IX embody the diversity and traditions of the GCA.

Zone X

Sixty-five members of GCA clubs from eight zones were welcomed by Akron Garden Club to the biennial Zone X Meeting, "Wild & Cultivated," September 17-19, 2013. The zone's first-ever flower show focused on native plants, with entries in floral design, horticulture and photography. Katie Heins – attending her first zone meeting as GCA President – opened the Tuesday zone business meeting, and attendees enjoyed dinners in nine club members' homes. Wednesday's "wild" agenda included a hands-on outdoor watershed exploration exercise at Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center, recipient of the Margaret Douglas Medal in 2011 and an address by

noted entomologist Doug Tallamy, recipient of the Margaret Douglas Medal in 2013, respectively.The evening's awards dinner recognized 11 with zone awards, including two Creative Leadership Awards. The meeting concluded on Thursday with a "cultivated" tour of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens, historic estate of Akron Garden Club founder Mrs. F. A Seiberling, and a presentation about flowers in French Impressionist painting by Kathryn Wat, Chief Curator, National Museum of Women in the Arts.

- The Garden Club of Cincinnati celebrated the centennial of its 1914 founding. The zone hailed a new honorary member of the GCA, Dr. James K. Bissell, curator of botany at Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Four gardens were accessioned by the Smithsonian Archives of American Gardens, thanks to efforts by Akron Garden Club, Bay City Garden Club, the Garden Club of Dayton and the Garden Club of Michigan.

Zone XI

Zone XI clubs work hard to build a strong foundation thanks to the vision of the organization's founders over 100 years ago, and their clubs focus to continue in this tradition.

The Zone XI meeting was in Omaha, hosted by the Loveland Garden Club. The weather was beautiful upon arrival in Omaha where the Loveland Garden Club hosted the 2013 Zone XI Meeting, "Where Roots Run Deep." An enormous bronze trail master on horseback offered greetings and beckoned all to follow as he led more than 100 larger than life bronze wagons, horses, oxen and families through six city blocks! The wagon train encountered a herd of stampeding bison that alarmed a flock of Canada geese. As the geese flew into and through an atrium, they changed from bronze to stainless steel… an extraordinary site that heralded a fabulous meeting.

Interest in photography continues to increase. The

theme "Celebrating the Seasons" at the Zone Meeting's Photography Show showcased the many talented photographers. This year there was a planned photography program in each club and one included an iPhone Photography Workshop.

The Garden Club of St. Louis will present Shirley Bass, the author of *The Secrets of Garden Photography* to speak and conduct a workshop for members volunteering for the photographic project, "Through the Seasons of Members' Gardens." Lake Minnetonka has asked a member of the Westport Garden Club to speak on photography. A Lake Forest Garden Club member has become editor of focus, the GCA's online photography publication. Town and Country Garden Club is very busy planning the 2014 Zone Meeting "Harbor to Arbor" in Sheboygan, Wisconsin on the shores of Lake Michigan. One of the most exciting aspects of the meeting will be the Photography Show "Celebrating the Seasons." This show, open to Zone XI members, will have classes embracing the four seasons.

Zone XI is excitedly preparing for the 2016 Annual Meeting inviting the GCA to the "Journey to the Heartland" – a land of sky blue waters, amber fields and green forest.

This Annual Report is a publication of the GCA's Communication Committee.
If you note any errors, please email communications@gcamerica.org.